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* Reports submitted by non-governmental organizations are issued without formal editing.

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1. Forum for Women and Development

(Special consultative status granted in 1999)

PART I. Introduction

i. FOKUS

- is a resource centre on international women's issues
- strengthens co-operation between women's organisations in Norway in their international involvement and co-operation
- contributes to the social, economic and political empowerment of women through international project co-operation and exchange of knowledge
- is raising awareness on the situation of women in a global perspective through public relations and information activities

Activities

- co-ordinates the project co-operation which Norwegian women's organisations have with women in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe
- administrates funds for information activities on international women's issues carried out by Norwegian women's organisations
- organises seminars and conferences
- is actively working with authorities and organisations to ensure their implementation of women's rights
- co-ordinates preparations for international conferences and maintains active national and international networks

The common denominator for the women organisations co-operation, that takes place through FOKUS, is the desire to strengthen women's human rights, based on the United Nations' Human Rights Convention and the Women's Convention (CEDAW).

The Platform of Action by the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing constitutes a natural framework for FOKUS.

PART II. Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations

i) Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies and/or major conferences and other United Nations Meetings.

1) 46th, 47th , 48th ,50th Commission on the Status of Women, New York. FOKUS representatives attended as part of the Norwegian official delegation, as well as participants of the NGO meetings.

2) ECE Beijing + 10, (Geneva December 2004). FOKUS representatives took part in the NGO side events as well as the official meetings.

3) Beijing +10 Conference: Forty-Ninth Session of the Commission of the Status of Women (New York, United Nations Headquarters, 28 February-11 March 2005) FOKUS representatives from the Secretariat and 20 member organisations, as well as 15 partners from the South invited by FOKUS attended the NGO side events. An alternative NGO report was prepared and presented at different meetings, and a workshop on documentation as a political tool for improving women's situation was arranged.

4) The 2005 World Summit - High-Level Plenary Meeting of the 60th Session of the General Assembly (New York, United Nations Headquarters, 14-16 September 2005). FOKUS representative was a part of Norwegian official delegation and lobbied for a stronger women's perspective.

5) United Nations General Assembly High Level meeting on HIV/AIDS

(31 May - 2 June 2006, United Nations, New York). FOKUS representative attended and lobbied for the inclusion of women's situation in the outcome document.

5) IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings (Singapore, 14-20 September 2006).

FOKUS representative attended as member of Norwegian official delegation, and lobbied for the integration of a women and gender perspective.

ii) **Cooperation with United Nations bodies in the field**

In 2004, 2005 and 2006 FOKUS facilitated the Norwegian launching of the UNFPA report State of World Population, in cooperation with UNFPA Nordic office.

ii) Activities in support of global principles

25th of November, the International Day against Violence against Women has been marked in form of seminars, torch-marches, as well as national awareness raising campaigns during the whole period. The campaigns and seminars were featured in media, on a local, regional and national level.

8th of March, the international women's day is marked every year through seminars, meetings, chronicles in major newspapers etc.

FOKUS has also marked Human Rights day 10th of December, and were in a working group celebrating the Nobel Peace price winners Shirin Ebadi in 2003, Wangari Maathai in 2004.

On August 31st 2006 FOKUS together with the Norwegian network for Women and the United Nations, arranged a small demonstration as the United Nations reform high level panel had their meeting in Oslo. Our message to the reform panel was THE WORLD NEEDS A STRONG UNITED NATIONS FOR WOMEN, and that the world needs:

- A drastic upgrading of the efforts of the United Nations system as a whole to strengthen women and gender equality and

- A new full-fledged United Nations organization for women as a driving force to meet the challenges of the new millennium.

FOKUS highlights different international issues through our Magazine, Women United and our information work in general. During this period, some of the topics covered were trafficking in women, women and water; access and influence, women in and after war and conflict, violence against women, women and the United Nations, Beijing + 10 what now?, women and religion and women and sexual rights etc.

2. International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education and Development

(Special consultative status granted in 2003)

PART I. Introduction

i. The aims and purposes of the organization and its main course of action.

VIDES promotes development education and voluntary social programmes in favour of marginalized young people, children and women; it also supports and organizes activities in the field of youth volunteers, bringing together volunteers from all over the world, to implement its projects and to promote women in developing countries and to educate various social minority groups in the light of a sustainable development. VIDES is also involved in development cooperation and education through projects in favour of youth and women at risk in the least developed countries, courses on development education for trainers and teachers, awareness campaigns through meetings and videos production.

ii. Any change on the organization vision and/or functions in terms of its orientation

Change in Statute: The Organization's aims and purposes remained the same. The first of November 2005 the Vides General Assembly determined to modify and update its statute regarding the duration of the Board of Directors: from 3 to 4 years.

New Members: the numbers of VIDES' members increased as well. New members are: Uruguay (2003), Slovakia (2004), Czech Republic (2005), Spain (2005), Guatemala (2005), Nicaragua (2005), Panama (2005), Chile (2005), Argentina (2005), Slovenia (2006).

PART II. Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations.

i. Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies and/or major conferences and other United Nations meetings

2003

- "The forty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women 3-13 march 2003, New York, United Nations Headquarters, United States of America." VIDES International is mostly concerned about violence against women. VIDES met NGOs interested in the same topic in order to establish a network to exchange information over the strategies to adopt preventive strategies.

- "The World Summit on the Information Society, United Nations Preparatory Commission 6-26 September 2003, Geneva Switzerland." VIDES was involved in groups working in the promotion of formal and no formal education and youth issues.

- "The 56th Annual DPI/NGO Conference "Human Security and Dignity: Fulfilling the Promise of the United Nations" 8-10 September 2003, New York, United Nations Headquarters, United States of America."

2004

- "The forty-eight session of the Commission on the Status of Women 12 January 2004, New York, United Nations Headquarters, United States of America." The concern regarding the situation of Women and Girls in Afghanistan brought VIDES to get interested to their situation once they have emigrated in Pakistan. VIDES sought contacts with other Pakistan's NGOs in order to study a project that could encourage their integration.

- "Rights and Responsibilities of NGOs in Consultative status with ECOSOC and the role of NGOs in implementing MDGs, UNDESA and Non-Governmental Organization in Consultative status meeting, 3 June 2004, Rome. VIDES learned much more about our consultative status and exchanged information with other NGOs.

- "The 57th Annual DPI/NGO Conference "Millennium Development Goals: Civil Society Takes Action" 8-10 September 2004, New York, United Nations Headquarters, United States of America." The Conference was the beginning of the commitment of all VIDES groups in order to make aware over this topic. The analyzed strategy brought the International Conference to consider the Millennium Development Goals as a fundamental way to build Peace.

2005

- "Beijing +10 Conference: Forty-Ninth Session of the Commission of the Status of Women 28 February -13 March 2005, New York, United Nations Headquarters, United States of America." After the Conference, VIDES needed, at local groups level, to implement the Millennium Development Goals in order to assure proper attention to women in all Millennium Goals.

- "The 61st session of the Commission on Human Rights 02-09 April 2005, Geneva, Switzerland." VIDES participated to the discussions over the following topics: Civil and Political Rights (item 11), Integration of Women's Human Rights (item 12), Children's Rights (item 13) and Special Groups' Rights (item 14). Concerning Women's Rights, VIDES presented two Written Statements denouncing gross violations in India, Brazil and Honduras.

- "Informal Interactive Hearings of the General Assembly, 23-24 June 2005, New York, United Nations Headquarters, United States of America". VIDES was selected as an active participant.

- "The 57th Annual DPI/NGO Conference : Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnerships and Renewal" 7-9 September 2005, New York, United Nations Headquarters, United States of America." VIDES organised a workshop on the MDGs.

2006

- "The 50th session of the Commission on the Status of Women 27 February -10 March 2006, New York, United Nations Headquarters, United States of America." The VIDES' Volunteers participation to the Conference brought concrete proposals for the groups on the equal participation of women and men in decision making processes at all levels.

- "The 59th Annual DPI/NGO Conference "Unfinished Business: Effective Partnership for human security and sustainable development" Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnerships and Renewal" 6-8 February 2006, New York, United States of America."

- "First Session of Human Rights Council 19/30 June 2006, Geneva, Switzerland". VIDES International presented three Written Statements: 1) the first was related to the report presented by the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; 2) the second was related to the report presented by the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and armed conflict; 3) the last one was related to the report presented by the Special Rapporteur on trafficking of persons and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women.

ii. Cooperation with United Nations bodies and/or specialized agencies in the field and/or at Headquarters.

- 2006. "Enhancing the life skills of rural people to contribute to the eradication of extreme poverty, hunger and other social ills". This project is a proposed collaboration between VIDES, FAO/UNESCO ERP (Education for Rural People) Partnership, University of Pisa Centro Interdipartimentale Scienze per la Pace (CISP), and the International Institute for Human Rights, Democracy and Peace (IIHRDP).

- 2006. VIDES applied to UNESCO for collaboration on the project LIFE (Literacy Initiative for Empowerment) which is part of the United Nations Literacy Decade 2003 – 2012.

iii. Initiatives undertaken by the organization in support of internationally agreed development goals, in particular the Millennium Development Goals, which now form the basis of the global agenda for the 21st century.

VIDES International contributed to the MDGs in the following geographical regions: Central America, South America, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. The main actions that have been undertaken are the following:

- Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Target 2. Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. ACTIONS:

- Children given nutritional care: 11,500

- Nutritional training for parents: 450

- Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education

Target 3. Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling. ACTIONS:

- School material packages delivered: 12,350

- Classrooms built or renovated: 360

- Teachers trained: 1,230

- School uniforms given: 10,150

- Libraries for children achieved: 230

- Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women

Target 4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015. ACTIONS.

- Scholarships to let girl children attend primary school: 6,750

- Scholarships to let girl children attend secondary school: 4,300

- Scholarships to let young girls attend university: 1,245

- Goal 4. Reduce child mortality

Target 5. Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five. ACTIONS.

- Provision of general medical care: 10,600

- Vaccinations: 2,600

- Health education courses for parents: 580

- Food supplement for children: 7,600

- Goal 5. Improve maternal health

Target 6. Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio. ACTIONS:

- Provisional of general medical care: 9,450

- Training for pregnant women: 567

- Goal 7. Ensure environmental sustainability.

Target 10. Halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation. ACTIONS:

- Wells built: 74

- Water filters: 120

Activities in Support of Global principles: Worldwide days promoted by United Nations are regularly advised on VIDES' web-site (www.vides.org). Moreover, at a local level, we organize encounters and meetings related to the World Human Rights, International Women's Day, Universal Children's Day and International Literacy Day.

3. Order of St. John

(Special consultative status granted in 1999)

Part I – Introduction

i. Aims

The aims of the Order of St John are:

1) The encouragement and promotion of all work of humanity and charity for the relief of persons in sickness, distress, suffering or danger, without distinction of race, class or creed;

2) The rendering of aid to the sick, wounded, disabled or suffering and the promotion of such permanent organisation during times of peace as may be available in times of civil emergency;

3) The maintenance and development of the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem and the clinics and research projects connected with the Hospital;

4) Instruction of members of the public in the principles and practice of First Aid, nursing and hygiene; and

5) The preparation, publication and distribution of textbooks and other training aids to facilitate such instruction.

ii. Changes:

a. Amendment to the Constitution

A general updating of the Order's statutes and Regulations has been completed, effective 1st January 2004. These changes do not have any material effect to the role and function of the Order, but are reported in accordance with your guidelines.

b. Changes in Geographical Distribution

The St John Associations of Sierra Leone and St Kitts & Nevis were dissolved in 2004. The Order no longer has any activities in those territories.

Part II - Contribution of the Order to the Work of the United Nations

i. Participation in the Work of the Economic and Social Council and its Subsidiary Bodies, and/or major conferences and other United Nations meetings

The Order of St John has not found it possible to participate directly in the work of the Economic and Social Council or its subsidiary bodies, due to our continuing commitment to our relationship with The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in South Africa and our work on behalf of The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). It is anticipated that this situation will soon change, as our current United Nations relationships are now mature, and it will be possible for us to concentrate more fully on contributing directly to the work of The Economic and Social Council.

ii. Co-operation with United Nations Bodies and/or Specialised Agencies in the Field and/or at Headquarters

- 4 meetings of the Inter-Provincial Task Team on Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses, (IMCI) convened by UNICEF South Africa. The following documents were contributed:
  - Results of a survey done by IMCI fieldworkers in Nyanga (January 2003);
  - An evaluation of the St John IMCI training (January 2003);
  - Report on fieldworkers' activities in Nyanga IMCI project (April 2003);
  - Employment, monitoring and supervision package for IMCI co-ordinators and fieldworkers in the Western Cape Province (June 2003);
  - Progress report on IMCI pilot project Nyanga to September 2003.
  - Preparation for Evaluation Report on IMCI by International Health and Development Consultant to WHO and Paediatric Health Director, UNICEF, South Africa: 10th October 2004 at St John in Nyanga, Cape Town.
- The IMCI Pilot Project in Nyanga, came to an end in June 2003, but St John continues to employ fieldworkers in Nyanga and to train community health workers to extend IMCI into the health districts adjacent to Nyanga.
- Continued treatment of UNRWA patients at the St John Eye Hospital, Jerusalem, funded annually by UNWRA at US$ 200,000.

iii. Initiatives undertaken by The Order of St John in Support of Internationally agreed Development Goals

a) Activities in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The Order of St John contributed to the MDGs in Africa, as follows:

Goal 4: Reduce Childhood Mortality

Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds the mortality rate amongst children under 5.

Actions:

- IMCI Project, Nyanga, Cape Town, South Africa:
  - 362 community health workers trained to implement the Household and Community component of IMCI
  - 38,401 visits paid to 1,750 families with at-risk children under 5

- Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) reduced from a peak in 2002 of 56.51 deaths per 1,000 live births to 39.89 in 2004 (latest figures available).

- Primary healthcare project, Malawi.
  - Trained 44 community health workers;
  - Participated in immunisation of 42,903 under-fives with local district nurses.
  - Undertook growth monitoring of 69,647 infants and children;
  - Participated in Measles immunisation programme reaching 14,000 children.
  - Provided advice to mothers of 942 malnourished children.

Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health

Target 6: Reduce maternal mortality rate by three-quarters.

Actions:

- Media campaign emphasised Key Family Practise in the nutrition and care of pregnant women, targeting 70,000 homes in Nyanga/Khayalitsha, South Africa.
- In Malawi, trained 44 community health workers and reached 32,764 people through home visits aimed at health education, encouragement of referrals and wider health issues.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases

Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

- Launched an integrated training programme of Home Based Care developed by the Priory for South Africa, to be progressively rolled out in South Africa.
- HIV/AIDS awareness incorporated in First Aid and Home Based Care training in South Africa. 11,368 persons trained; 1,828 at advanced level.
- Raised internal funds for the expansion of Home Based Care training into other countries in Africa where St John is present.
- Training programme launched in Kenya in 2004, achieved the following:
  - 56 trainers of trainers trained in Home Based Care.
  - 1,336 community health workers trained.
  - 542 additional care-givers trained;
  - 2,780 people living with HIV/AIDS reached;
  - 1,348 peer-educators trained;
  - 25,156 people reached by those peer-educators.
- In Malawi, 15 people trained in Home Based Care, 12 as instructors.
- In Zimbabwe, 14 people trained in Home Based Care, all qualified as instructors.
- In Uganda, 15 people trained in Home Based Care.

2) Activities in support of the general principles of the United Nations to empower communities to manage basic health and safety in their community and improve their general standard of living.

- St John Ophthalmic Hospital, Jerusalem (including Gaza and Hebron Clinics)
  - Number of outpatients – 198,981

- Number of operations (major and minor) – 15,668
- Number of in-patients – 10,461
- Number of outreach patients – 35,888.

- 4,385 people trained in First Aid in South Africa - 1,745 at advanced level.
- 90,804 tested in 14 St John Ambulance eye clinics in South Africa, of whom 63,933 were supplied with spectacles and 6,003 were referred to hospitals.

4. Prison Fellowship International

(Special consultative status granted in 1983)

Part I. Introduction

1. Prison Fellowship International (PFI) is a voluntary association of national Prison Fellowship organizations in 110 countries. PFI is involved in a broad range of criminal justice concerns and works through its affiliate organizations to promote participation in criminal justice. PFI provides a world-wide forum for discussing issues and developing awareness concerning crime and the treatment of offenders.

2. PFI is governed by an international Board of Directors comprised of two elected representatives from each of the six geographical regions that it serves (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America and the Caribbean and the Pacific). The Board represents a broad based membership of community leaders, criminal justice officials, and concerned citizens. PFI maintains offices and staff in Europe, Asia, Pacific and North America.

3. PFI has significant interests in United Nations activities concerned with crime and the treatment of Offenders, human rights, women, youth and the family, relief and development, peace, and religious freedom.

Part II. Contribution of the Organization to the United Nations

Participation in the Economic and Social Council and its Subsidiary Bodies

4. PFI has been extensively involved in as a member of the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (New York).

   - PFI's Programme Manager for the Centre for Justice and Reconciliation participated in regular meetings of the Alliance (the second Friday of January, March, May, July, September November each year).
   - For the period of 2002-2005, the PFI's Programme Manager served as member-at-large of the board of directors of the Alliance.
   - PFI's Executive Director of the Centre for Justice and Reconciliation and Programme Manager participated in the Working Party on Restorative justice and an ad hoc committee organizing NGO participation at the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice hosted by the Government of Thailand in Bangkok, 18-25 April 2005.
   - PFI sent two delegates to the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice hosted by the Government of Thailand in Bangkok, 18-25 April 2005. It conducted ancillary sessions on Restorative Justice. PFI's Executive Director for the Centre for Justice and Reconciliation participated in Workshop 2: Enhancing Criminal Justice Reform Including Restorative Justice on 22 April 2005. PFI also made two interventions related to Standards and Norms and Corruption.

Co-operation with United Nations Bodies and/or specialized agencies in the field and/or at Headquarters

5. The PFI Executive Director for the Centre for Justice and Reconciliation participate in Expert Committee meetings organized by the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime on issues related to criminal justice including the editing of the Handbook on Restorative Justice (Vienna, Austria, 28 January – 1 February 2006) and the Criminal Justice Assessment Toolkit (Belgium, 24-29 July 2006).

6. PFI maintained regular efforts to inform its leadership and membership about the United Nations and to encourage support for United Nations activities. PFI maintained two representatives at the United Nations Headquarters (New York, Geneva, and Vienna). Information and news related to United Nations activities were sent to PFI national affiliates regularly and was disseminated through PFI's various publications and websites.

5. World Blind Union

(General consultative status granted in 1999)

The World Blind Union (WBU) is the only organisation entitled to speak on behalf of blind and partially sighted persons of the world, representing 162 million blind and visually impaired persons from about 600 organisations in 178 countries. The WBU is a non-political, non-religious, non-governmental and non-profit-making organization, working with advocacy towards governments, legislators and United Nations-agencies to promote the Human rights of blind and visually impaired persons.

In August 2006 WBU inaugurated its first permanent office in Toronto, Canada with Ms. Penny Hartin as CEO. The CEO will be committed to most of the running administrative tasks jointly with elected officers.

WBU has participated and contributed to a high extent to the work of ECOSOC and United Nations bodies and specialized agencies during the period 2003-2006, through WBU main representative Ms. Kicki Nordström (up til December 2004 WBU president and thereafter Immediate Past president and current Chair for the WBU committee on cooperation with the United Nations and its agencies). Unless otherwise specified, the participation in the activities below concerns Ms. Nordström.

2003

- Meeting with IDA and United Nations agencies (WHO, ILO, UNESCO and former United Nations Special rapporteur on disability), Almåsa, Sweden, February 28, 2003 to define strategies towards an inclusion of the supplement into the Standard Rules on equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities
- The 59th session of UNHCHR in Geneva, April 7-8, 2003, to observe and provide input under item 14 on the agenda "Other vulnerable groups and individuals - Disability".
- Speaker to the United Nations Committee on the rights of the child in Geneva, September 29-30, 2003 combined with an up-date on the progress of the WSIS and visit to the Disability and Rehabilitation team at WHO.
- Key address speaker on behalf of Civil Societies in connection with the first WSIS conference in Geneva, December 3, 2003.

2004

- 2nd United Nations Ad Hoc Committee meeting , New York, 5-16 January 2004, to propose a text for a convention on disability to be presented to the Ad Hoc Committee, convening the 24 May - 4 June 2004.
- The 42nd United Nations Commission for Social Development, New York, 4 – 15 February 2004, to provide input on item 3 on the agenda under (b) Review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups: (ii) Equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities, dealing with the Supplement to the United Nations Standard Rules.
- Meeting with Sir John Daniel UNESCO, 29 March, 2004, to discuss matters of common concern to the WBU and the UNESCO.
- Informal Inter Agency Meeting held at UNESCO Headquarter, Paris 26 March 2004 for an update of ongoing programs and policies in the disability sector.
- 60th session of the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland 6-8 April 2004 a) to participate as a representative of the International Disability Alliance (IDA) of which WBU is member, in a panel discussion arranged by the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR), April 6 b) on behalf of IDA, to

address the Commission on Human Rights under point 14d on the Agenda, "persons with Disabilities", c) on behalf of WBU, meet with Dr. Lee, Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

- The 3rd Ad Hoc Committee Meeting, New York, USA 23 May – 5 June, 2004. This was the first real negotiation of a draft text.

2005

- The 5th United Nations Ad hoc Committee meeting, New York, USA, 23 January – 5 February 2005. The convention was one step closer to its realisation after this AHC meeting.
- Steering committee meeting with the UNESCO Flagship on disability: Towards Inclusion. 5 February, 2005.
- Meeting with the DAR-team of WHO, 11-12 April 2005 held at WHO head office, Geneva Switzerland to discuss matters of common interest such as the World Report on Disability as the Plan of Action (POA) for the newly re-organised DAR team.
- Meeting with UNESCO at UNESCO head quarter, Paris, France May 17, 2005 to introduce the ICEVI to UNESCO's Flagship on Teacher's Training. The meeting also took up matters of mutual interest for both ICEVI and WBU.
- Report from the Panel of Experts meeting, 7 of August 2005, Millennium United Nations Plaza Hotel New York, United States of America, to introduce the SR to the International Disability movement in order to enhance credibility and trust.
- The 6th United Nations AHC meeting held in New York, 1-12 August 2005, to carry out a second reading of the articles from 15-25 of the United Nations Convention on a comprehensive and integral international convention on the protection and promotion of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.
- The third Preparatory Committee meeting to the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS), Geneva, 19-30 October 2005, to prepare for the second phase of the WSIS.
- The WSIS and the role of Local Authorities held in Bilbao , Spain, 9-11 November 2005 to formulate a vision of the future Information and Communication Technology Society in a declaration with resolutions to be put forward to the up-coming meeting in Tunis.
- The World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) held in Tunis, Tunisia, 13-18 November 2005. The most concrete result was the adoption of the Global Disability Forum Declaration.

2006

- The 7th United Nations AHC meeting, New York, United States of America, 16 January - 3 February 2006 to start the actual negotiation process of the text.
- UNESCO Flagship on Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion meeting, 12 August, 2005 Helmsley Hotel, New York, to discuss the new secretariat in Finland, etc.
- 8th Ad Hoc Committee meeting, New York 14–25 August, to advocate on behalf of WBU/IDA and IDC to ensure that critical issues were included in the text.
- Human Rights Commission session 18 September - 6 October, Geneva, Switzerland, which coincided with another mission in Geneva. WBU attended the two first days of the second session of the Human Rights Council.

WBU initiatives undertaken in support of the United Nations Millennium Goals are associated with MDG no 2: Achieve universal primary education and to ensure that children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. The negotiations during Ad hoc meetings where the final text includes the mentioning of Braille and where special education is stressed, are examples of WBU commitment in line with this MDG. Other commitments include the cooperation with UNESCO Flagship Education for all, which also involves the publication of a book, The invisible child, edited by WBU, UNESCO and ONCE in Spain and written in cooperation with members of the WBU Child Committee.

MDG No 3 concerning the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is another focal point of WBUs work, where the WBU Women's committee under its former chair Ms. Nordström carried out leadership seminars for women in all 6 WBU regions. Furthermore, the quadrennial Women's Forum, which precedes the WBU General Assembly gathers women from the whole WBU membership for empowerment and training reasons. As a result, the number of women in WBU leading positions has multiplied.

The WBU working group on technology has participated in line with the goal stated in MDG No 8 - Develop a global partnership for development and in particular concerning benefits of new technologies through its commitment in the WSIS work, where WBU members put focus on the requirements of blind and visually impaired persons to have full access to information and communication technologies.

Activities in Support of Global Principles, such as Full Human Rights for Persons with disabilities have held a strong position on the WBU agenda which is manifested through extensive commitment as far as participation in the Ad hoc meetings and other advocacy missions in order to promote the work towards a disability convention.

WBU should however perform even better in the implementation of United Nations programmes if not for the following problems:

a) Information from United Nations agencies posted in formats not accessible for blind and visually impaired readers. Please avoid Adobe, PDF and power point formats. Please feel free to contact WBU in case of doubts.

b) Funding for participation in United Nations meetings is a major problem as disability is no priority on the agenda among funding agencies.